

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CUBAN CONVERSATIONS WITH ZAMBIA AND PROSPECTS FOR
CEASEFIRE AND WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES IN ANGOLA

REF: STATE 10167

1. SUMMARY. IN LENGTHY CONVERSATION AT STATE HOUSE JAN 17, PRESIDENTIAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER MARK CHONA REVIEWED PRIVATE ZAMBIAN DISCUSSIONS WITH CUBANS DURING THEIR CURRENT VISIT HERE (LUSAKA 86 AND 89). CHONA REVEALED GRZ POSITION WAS MUCH FIRMER ON CUBANS IN URGING THEM TO QUIT ANGOLA THAN LOCAL PRESS INDICATED, BUT THAT IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS ARE NOT ENCOURAGING AND BATTLE FOR WITHDRAWAL WILL BE LONG AND HARD BECAUSE OF SOVIET STRATEGY IN AFRICA (LUSAKA 115). CHONA CONVINCED ANY PRIOR WITHDRAWAL BY SOUTH AFRICANS WOULD ONLY ENCOURAGE CUBANS FILL VACUUM AND RACE FOR NAMIBIAN BORDER. AGREED AFRICAN MODERATES TOGETHER WITH WESTERN SUPPORTERS SHOULD TAKE PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE. BELIEVES REAL ISSUES NOW ARE CEASEFIRE AND WITHDRAWAL, NOT WHETHER THERE IS AN INCREASE IN AFRICAN RECOGNITION OF MPLA. OBVIOUS THAT ZAMBIA HAS SO FAR BEEN CONCENTRATING MORE ON PATCHING UP DIFFERENCES WITH TANZANIA AND MOZAMBIQUE RATHER THAN LAYING CONCRETE PLANS FOR NEXT STEPS IN ANGOLA. HOWEVER, THEY EXPECT HAVE CLEARER NOTION OF OPTIONS OPEN TO THEM FOLLOWING EXPECTED RECEIPT JAN 19 OF BREZHNEV'S REPLY TO KAUNDA JAN 4 DEMARCHE TO SOVIETS. END SUMMARY.

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2. CHONA CONFIRMED ZAMBIA DELIBERATELY REFRAINED FROM

TAKING HOSTILE STAND WITH CUBANS,
IN FACT EVEN SENT THEM ON A FAMILIARIZATION TOUR OF ZAMBIA,
BECAUSE ZAMBIANS FEEL CHANCES FOR CONCILIATION AND REASONABLE
WITHDRAWAL IN LONG RUN MAY BE BETTER. HOWEVER, CHONA SAID,
ZAMBIANS ARE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT CUBAN INTENTIONS AND FEAR
THEY HAVE ENTERED AFRICA FOR THE LONG HAUL WITH NO RPT NO
INTENTION OF VOLUNTARILY WITHDRAWING. WHETHER SOVIETS WILL
EVER AGREE TO THEIR WITHDRAWAL IS SOMETHING ELSE AND MAY
DEPEND UPON BREZHNEV REPLY TO KAUNDA'S LETTER OF JAN 4.
REPLY NOW SCHEDULED FOR DELIVERY BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR JAN 19.
CHONA SEES BATTLE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN FORCES AS LONG AND
HARD BECAUSE IT IS PART OF WHAT HE SEES AS GRAND STRATEGY OF
SOVIETS FOR EXTENDING AND CONSOLIDATING THEIR STRATEGIC
POSITION IN AFRICA.

3. CHONA SAID ZAMBIANS "ATTACKED" CUBANS WITH FIRMNESS FOR
THEIR PRESENCE IN ANGOLA. DID IT HAVE ANY EFFECT, I ASKED.
CHONA SAID HE THOUGHT ONE OR TWO DELEGATION MEMBERS WERE
SWAYED BY ZAMBIAN LOGIC ALTHOUGH OSMANY CIENFUEGOS
WHO HEARDED DELEGATION WAS TOUGH AND UNYIELDING.

4. CHONA SAID HE NOW CONVINCED AFTER TALKING WITH CUBANS
THAT IF SOUTH AFRICANS WERE TO WITHDRAW FIRST (MY REFERENCE
TO SECY'S SUGGESTION IN JAN 14 PRESS CONFERENCE), THIS WOULD
ONLY CREATE A VACUUM WHICH CUBANS WOULD IMMEDIATELY TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF RATHER THAN RESPECT. CUBANS WOULD RACE SOUTH
TO NAMIBIAN BORDER. DO NOT FOOL YOURSELF, CHONA ADDED,
NAMIBIA IS CUBA'S NEXT STOP AS SOON AS THEY FINISH WITH
ANGOLA. MOREOVER, SOVIET GRAND STRATEGY PROBABLY INCLUDES
ZIMBABWE EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER SOVIETS AND CUBANS ACHIEVE
THEIR OBJECTIVES IN ANGOLA. CHONA SAID SOVIETS WOULD STOUTLY
RESIST BEING SHAMED OUT OF ANGOLA. THEY WILL HOLD FAST UNLESS
THERE ARE COMPELLING, OVERRIDING INTERESTS AFFECTING SOVIETS
IN OTHER AREAS.

5. AS FOR NEXT STEPS AND AVAILABLE OPTIONS REGARDING SOVIET
AND CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA, CHONA AGREED THAT AFRICAN MODERATES
TOGETHER WITH WESTERN SUPPORTERS SHOULD TAKE PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE
HE MOST RECEPTIVE TO ANY IDEAS US HAS ON SUBSTANCE AND TACTICS.
HE WAS ESPECIALLY CRITICAL OF BBC, DEUTSCHE WELLE AND FRENCH

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RADIO FOR WAY THEY WERE REPORTING "MPLA VICTORIES" IN ANGOLA.
THESE ARE CUBAN VICTORIES, CHONA INSISTED, AND SHOULD BE SO AD-
VERTISED BY THOSE FAVORING MAJORITY RULE IN ANGOLA. CUBAN PRESENCE
DOES NOT SHOW THAT MPLA IS STRONG OR POPULAR; RATHER, THAT
IT IS WEAK. NEITHER DOES IT DISPROVE EXISTENCE
OF FNLA AND UNITA FORCES OR THEIR SYMPATHIZERS AMONG
ANGOLAN POPULATION.

6. CHONA SHOWED BASIC PREFERENCE FOR SECURING A CEASEFIRE BEFORE A WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FORCES, MAINLY BECAUSE HE DOES NOT TRUST SOVIET AND CUBANS TO UNDERTAKE VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL. BELIEVES IT WOULD REQUIRE UN SUPERVISION AND ENFORCEMENT FOR WHICH THERE YET NO PLANNING OR MACHINERY. CHONA BELIEVES OAU SUMMIT SHOWED THERE LARGBJ BODY OF AGREEMENT ON CEASEFIRE AMONG AFRICAN STATES IRRESPECTIVE OF POSITIONS ON MPLAIRECOGNITION AND THIS SHOULD BE DQPLOITED (LUSAKA '04). CHONA ACKNOWLEDGED THERE ARE SOME STATES SUCH AS GHANA WHO WOULD NOT ACCEPT A CEASEFIRE BEFORE SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS PULLED OUT. THIS IS FRUSTRATING CHICKEN-AND-EGG PROBLEM BUT NEEDS TO BE TACKLED. CHONA CONCLUDED HIS DISCUSSION ON CEASEFIRE AND WITHDRAWAL PROBLEM BY NOTING THESE WERE REAL ISSUES, NOT INCREASE IN MPLA RECOGNITIONS. HE CONFIDED THERE WILL BE FEW ADDITIONAL RECOGNITIONS AND TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY WILL NOT BE ACHIEVED.

7. IN DISCUSSING OPTIONS FACING US ALL IN IMMEDIATE POST-SUMMIT PERIOD, IT OBVIOUS ZAMBIANS HAVE CONCENTRATED THEIR ENERGIES MORSION PATCHING UP OR PAPERING OVER THEIR DIFFERENCES WITH TANZANIA AND MOZAMBIQUE (LUSAKA 114) THAN THEY HAVE IN LAYING PLANS FOR NEXT STEPS ON BRINGING PEACE, YVABILITY, AND A COALITION GOVERNMENT TO ANGOLA. CHONA SAID HE WOULD BE GIVING MORE THOUGHT TO THIS IN COMING DAYS IN PREPARATION FOR MY REQUESTED MEETING WITH PRES KAUANDA. AT THAT TIME ZAMBIANS WILL HAVE CLEARER NOTION OF OPTIONS. ALSO MUCH WILL DEPEND, CHONA SAID, ON MOSCOW'S POSITION WHICH SOVIET AMB WILL DELIVER TO STATE HOUSE JAN 19 AND CERTAINLY ON SECY KISSINGER'S DISCUSSIONS IN MOSCOW. CHONA WAS ANXIOUS THAT SECY HAVE BENEFIT OF BREZHNEV LETTER TO KAUANDA. I EXPRESSED GRATITUDE, SAYING I WOULD AWAIT HIS CALL ON HIS MEETING WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR SO AS BE ABLE INFORM SECY PROMPTLY.

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